

**A Post-Imperial Cold War Paradox:
The Anglo-Nigerian Defence Agreement
1958-1962**

Abstract

As the recent and current French military interventions in West Africa have illustrated, France succeeded in establishing long-lasting security relationships with its former colonies during the transfer of power. In Britain's case, by contrast, decolonisation was largely followed by military withdrawal. This was not, however, for lack of trying. The episode of the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Agreement clearly illustrates that Britain, driven by its global Cold War military strategy, wanted to secure its long-term interests in Sub-Saharan Africa. The agreement was first welcomed by the Nigerian elite, which was not only anglophile and anti-communist, but also wanted British military assistance for the build-up of its armed forces. Yet in Nigeria, the defence pact was faced with mounting opposition, and decried as a neo-colonial scheme. Whereas this first allowed the Nigerian leaders to extract strategic, material and financial concessions from Britain, it eventually led to the abrogation of the agreement. Paradoxically, Britain's Cold War grand strategy created not only the need for the agreement, but also to abrogate it. In the increasingly global East-West struggle, the agreement was strategically desirable, but politically counterproductive.

Keywords

Britain, Nigeria, Anglo-Nigerian Relations, West Africa, Cold War, Defence, Transfer of power, Post-imperial, Neo-colonialism, Non-alignment

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Since decolonization, France has repeatedly intervened militarily in its former Sub-Saharan African colonies, most recently in Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, and the Central African Republic. These interventions have been facilitated, if not rendered possible, by France's pre-positioned forces and military bases on the continent, and close defence ties with mostly francophone African countries. Both the bases and the defence relationships date back to the decolonisation period. During the transfer of power, France was able to establish lasting security relationships through defence and military assistance agreements with most of its Sub-Saharan African colonies.¹ In the case of the British, and in stark contrast to their long-time imperial rival, African independence was soon followed by formal military withdrawal. Instead, with the temporary exception of Kenya,² Britain increasingly relied on informal and often shaky defence relationships with its former African colonies, if at all they looked to London for their military needs. Admittedly, the British did not attach as much strategic importance to their post-colonial role in Africa as the French did, and thus pursued more moderate and cost-effective military aims. Nevertheless, Britain had specific and important strategic interests in Sub-Saharan Africa, which it tried to secure through the establishment of formal defence relationships.³ The episode of the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Agreement illustrates particularly well this, as well as the delicate bargaining between the (former) imperial power and the emerging or newly independent African state against the background of the Cold War.

During the negotiations in the run up to independence, the British secured from the Nigerian elites the commitment that as an independent country Nigeria would enter into a defence agreement with Britain. While the British desired to protect their strategic interests in

West Africa, the largely anglophile Nigerian leaders believed that a defence relationship with Britain would be beneficial for their country's security and the development of their armed forces. The Nigerians stood by their promise, and a few months after achieving independence in October 1960, the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Agreement was signed. The latter became, however, increasingly unpopular in Nigeria. In light of the strong and mounting opposition, the Nigerian and British governments decided to abrogate the defence agreement in January 1962 – only roughly a year after its entry into force. The short-lived formalised postcolonial defence relationship between Britain and Nigeria has so far only received relatively limited attention. The works that focus extensively on the defence agreement were written before archival sources became available,⁴ and those on postcolonial defence and foreign policy, as well as on decolonisation, deal only marginally with this episode of Anglo-Nigerian defence relations.⁵ A notable exception is Hakeem Ibikunle Tijani, who discusses the defence agreement with the help of archival sources. Yet with a focus on Britain and Nigerian leftist nationalists, the analysis remains brief and does not sufficiently explore the strategic and political issues and reasons that led to the idea, drafting, signature and, finally, abrogation of the defence agreement.⁶

The intricacies of the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Agreement throw up a number of intriguing questions, which a closer analysis allows to answer. The Nigerian opposition decried the defence agreement as a neo-colonial scheme that was an obstacle to full independence. As the continuous French security role in Africa referred to above illustrates, and as Martin Thomas has argued, decolonisation did not always result in fully-fledged independence. In numerous cases, it represented the transition from formal imperial rule to informal influence or control.⁷ Was the defence agreement thus part of a British neo-colonial design in Nigeria? The main argument of this article is that this was not the case. Like in the case of decolonisation itself,⁸ the determinant, albeit not the only factor for both the creation

and the abrogation of the defence agreement was the Cold War. Paradoxically, Britain's global Cold War grand strategy created the need not only to enter into a defence agreement with Nigeria, but also to abrogate it.

In the East-West struggle, the agreement was strategically desirable, but politically counterproductive. British military planners wanted to secure defence facilities in Nigeria to sustain and reinforce Britain's capabilities and capacity to wage limited hot wars and, to a lesser extent, global war. In the latter scenario, the Eastern bloc, led by the Soviet Union, was obviously the only potential enemy. But also the former scenario was driven by a Cold War approach. Limited interventions were and could be considered necessary if a colony or a friendly country seemed to be exposed to communist incursions, or when an 'orderly' transfer of power was threatened, and this could ultimately benefit the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, however, a formalised defence relationship with a former African colony could be considered a neo-imperial scheme, strengthen the opposition in Nigeria, and thereby play into communist hands. This clearly ran contrary to London's aim to gain the allegiance, or at least maintain a friendly attitude, of newly independent states. Both the military and the political approach were thus permeated by the Cold War. This was inevitable, because by the late 1950s, the Cold War had also arrived in Africa⁹ and, as a consequence, British policymakers shifted to a post-imperial mind-set. The 'legacy of empire', as John Kent has argued, 'would have to fulfil a cold war role'.¹⁰ Yet in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Cold War in Africa was – with the notable exception of the Congo – still predominantly political and ideological. As a result, and as will be argued in this article, politics trumped the military in the Nigerian case.

This was not only due to the fact that the defence facilities were ultimately not considered essential and Britain's global role was increasingly questioned, but also because the military benefits the defence agreement would entail were dwindling as a consequence of Nigerian bargaining and political pressure. This article will thus illustrate that in the Cold

War in Africa, the British were not the only actors, and the Nigerians were not merely passive recipients of policies decided in Whitehall. The decolonisation process was influenced by both the imperial power and the colonised.¹¹ The Anglo-Nigerian Defence agreement was negotiated between British and Nigerian policymakers. Although it was first initiated by the British, it then received a strong Nigerian imprint, and was finally abrogated because of Nigerian political and popular opposition. It will thus transpire that not only British policymakers and the Nigerian elite, but also the Nigerian people played an influential role. While the British were fully engaged in the Cold War, many Nigerians wanted to remain aloof from the East-West struggle. Like so many others in the emerging Third World, they envisioned a future not only free from imperial rule, but also from Cold War alliances.¹² Consequently, the British had to adapt to the Nigerians if they wanted to retain their goodwill, which was deemed important in the Cold War. In order to show the determinant role of the East-West struggle in the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Agreement, as well as the increasingly influential role of Nigerian actors, this article focuses first on the British but mutually agreed idea of a defence agreement during the final stage in the negotiations for independence; then on the reframing and drafting of the agreement following Nigerian assertiveness and demands in 1960; and, finally, on its abrogation in reaction to mounting Nigerian discontent.

Strategic Consensus

By the late 1950s, decolonisation in West Africa became increasingly inevitable, and thus accepted by policymakers in Whitehall. The question was not anymore whether, but how and when exactly independence would be granted. Even though Nigeria was not considered ready for full independence, an accelerated transfer of power was seen as necessary to retain the Nigerians' goodwill. But during this process, Britain wanted to secure its strategic

requirements in Nigeria through a defence agreement – not least because with the globalisation of the Cold War against the background of accelerated decolonization, West Africa had gained unprecedented strategic importance in Whitehall's military planning.

The experience of the Second World War had increased Africa's strategic importance for manpower, resources, and bases. In light of the coming loss of India, the continent thus became temporarily prominent in British strategic thinking. Especially the Labour Prime Minister Clement Attlee argued in favour of a stronger reliance on Africa, rather than the Middle East. Yet Attlee had to give in to his Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, and the Chiefs of Staff, who preferred to base Britain's great power role on Asia and the Middle East.¹³ Africa thus rapidly returned to its status as a zone of secondary strategic importance. But in the wake of the Suez disaster in 1956, and the Iraqi Revolution of 1958, Sub-Saharan Africa suddenly moved into the focus of British military planners. Staging and overflying rights in the Middle East were increasingly limited and contested, and Britain would thus have to rely on alternative air routes to circumvent the barrier in the Middle East to deploy or reinforce troops in its colonial possessions or other theatres outside of Europe in the case of a threat or conflict. The most realistic and attractive alternative to connect the United Kingdom to Asia was through West Africa, i.e. Nigeria. Moreover, according to Defence Minister Duncan Sandys' White Paper of 1957, air-staging facilities and overflying rights were particularly important to conduct expeditionary operations outside Europe to sustain Britain's world role in the Cold War. Moreover, and as David French has recently argued, Sandys did not intend to reduce, but rather to maintain or even reinforce Britain's world role through his reforms. While the 1957 White Paper shifted the focus of Britain's defence policy towards nuclear deterrence and dramatically reduced the size of the armed forces, it also aimed to strengthen the capabilities and capacity to mount expeditionary operations. In light of the reduction of the number and size of overseas garrisons, troops were supposed to be flown into operational

theatres. This entailed that staging posts and overflying rights, notably in Nigeria, gained significantly in importance. Admittedly, it was not necessarily Africa as such which was strategically important in the eyes of British military planners. But the African continent was nevertheless supposed to play an important role in supporting Britain's global defence posture. As a result, and in line with Attlee's vision a decade earlier, British defence interests moved further south and henceforth stretched from West Africa to Southeast Asia.¹⁴ With independence looming in Nigeria, it thus became important to secure the strategic requirements for after independence.

The government of Prime Minister Harold Macmillan came to accept by the late 1950s that Nigerian independence had to be granted rather sooner than later. Rising nationalist sentiment in Nigeria, Ghana's independence in 1957, and the imminent independence of French West Africa considerably weakened Britain's position. In addition, it was feared that delaying independence would tarnish Britain's international reputation, provoke unrest, undermine British and western influence and, ultimately, favour communist infiltration. In the amicable constitutional talks between 1957 and 1959, after the consolidation of regional self-government, the British gave in to the Nigerian demand to set a firm date for full independence in October 1960.¹⁵ It was within the framework of these talks that the British obtained the Nigerian commitment to a defence agreement.

In response to Macmillan's request for an imperial 'profit and loss account', the Officials' Committee report of May 1957 emphasised the strategic importance of Nigeria. The main reason was Kano airport in Northern Nigeria, which was on the air communications line to Uganda, Kenya, the Arabian Peninsula and the Far East, and thus formed an important part of the trans-African air reinforcement route. 'The loss of the present airfield facilities at Kano', it was concluded, 'would have a most serious effect on the ability to safeguard British interests in the Indian Ocean area'. In addition, the ports of Lagos and Port Harcourt were

considered ‘convenient’, yet ‘not essential’ in limited and global war.¹⁶ As a result, the Cabinet concluded the same month that it was important to retain such ‘strategic concessions’ as overflying rights and staging posts in the Nigerian independence process.¹⁷ The strategic requirements in the colonies that were likely to achieve independence in the foreseeable future were further refined by the Joint Planning Staff (JPS). In its report of late July 1957, it listed Nigeria alongside Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, Aden, Singapore, and East Africa as one of the strategically most important colonies for the UK’s sea, air, and wireless communications, network of bases, and military manpower sources. More specifically, the JPS recommended to add the following paragraph to the Colonial Office’s memorandum on ‘Future Constitutional Developments in the Colonies’, which was supposed to reflect and guide governmental decolonisation policy:

With the emergence of the potential air/sea barrier in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Central African air route for the reinforcement of territories south and east of Suez has assumed great importance. The airfield at Kano is an essential link in this chain. A minor requirement may be the use of the ports of Lagos and Port Harcourt in global war. The United Kingdom would therefore wish to retain unfettered overflying and staging rights and in global war the right to use Lagos and Port Harcourt.¹⁸

In late August, Nigeria’s strategic importance was again highlighted by the JPS. In a report mandated by the Minister of Defence on how Britain could secure strategic facilities in territories that were likely to achieve independence, Nigeria figured among the ‘Essential or Potential Centres of Communication’.¹⁹ In line with the Defence White Paper, Nigeria was supposed to offer staging posts to reinforce small overseas garrisons, notably through a strategic reserve and an air transport force. Thereby, it was supposed to play its part in Britain’s defence strategy, which aimed ‘to win the cold war and prevent global war’ by

resisting and deterring aggression in cooperation with allied countries, notably through NATO, SEATO, and the Baghdad Pact; and defending British territories against local attack and conducting limited operations in overseas emergencies. Nigeria was thus not an end, but a means in Britain's overall defence planning. Nevertheless, it was considered an important means, i.e. 'an essential link' in the 'Central African air route for the reinforcement of territories south and east of Suez'. The relevant defence facilities in Nigeria had thus to be retained, preferably 'by agreement and good will'.²⁰ By early autumn, the revised memorandum on the 'Future Constitutional Developments in the Colonies' for the Cabinet Colonial Policy Committee had fully taken on board the view of the JPS. Moreover, alternatives to the Central African air-route via Kano, notably around Africa or across French West and Equatorial Africa, were considered undesirable.²¹

With decolonisation gathering pace in Africa, the JPS and the Chiefs of Staff confirmed Nigeria's strategic importance. In February 1958, in reviewing British defence requirements in West Africa in reaction to Ghanaian independence, the Chiefs of Staff approved a Joint Planning Staff report according to which the 'emergence of the Middle East barrier' had further increased the importance of the trans-African reinforcement route. With Kano airfield considered an 'essential link' of this air route, it was concluded that 'the United Kingdom would [...] wish to retain unfettered overflying and staging rights at all times'. In global war, Britain also required the use of the ports of Lagos and Port Harcourt. While the Chiefs of Staff considered it 'politically impracticable' to tie the granting of independence to the provision of defence facilities, they advised to secure the defence requirements in West Africa either through informal arrangements or formal agreements.²² Yet again, and as a JPS report of the same month made clear, British military planners did not have the defence of Nigeria, or Africa more generally, in mind. The continent was considered unlikely to be threatened in global war, and the strategy for the defence of Africa was based on the 'nuclear

deterrent', which offered 'the only hope of preventing global war and thus obviating the need to defence [*sic*] the Middle East and Africa against armed aggression'.²³ Nevertheless, defence facilities in Nigeria, Kano in particular, remained important means in Britain's global defence scheme, especially since there were no straightforward alternatives available.²⁴

As a result, a defence agreement with Nigeria came increasingly to be seen as the best way forward to secure the United Kingdom's (UK) strategic interests.²⁵ It was questionable, however, whether an agreement would provide truly unrestricted access to Kano airfield. The Governor-General of Nigeria doubted that Kano could be used for war with a Muslim country in the Middle East.²⁶ In searching for alternatives to Kano, the Ministry of Defence thus came up with the idea of an enclave in Nigeria, which would remain under British sovereignty after independence.²⁷ Yet both the idea of unfettered staging and overflying rights and the suggestion of an enclave were sceptically received by the Colonial Office and the Commonwealth Relations Office. It was feared that by pushing the Nigerian leaders into accepting such 'traces of Colonialism', the future of Anglo-Nigerian relations, which rested on goodwill, would be jeopardised.²⁸ The idea of a defence agreement was not rejected. It should not, however, be directly linked to independence.²⁹

Yet the Ministry of Defence and, especially, the Air Ministry, remained determined to secure Britain's strategic requirements in Nigeria before independence.³⁰ In the run up to the constitutional conference with Nigerian representatives of October 1958, the Defence Minister emphasised to the Colonial Secretary that it was essential to

secure by treaty, permanently and without any political escape clauses, unrestricted rights (a) to overfly Nigeria; (b) to use Kano Airport as an air-staging post for military aircraft; (c) to bring aviation fuel, equipment and other supplies, etc., overland from Lagos to Kano; and (d) to use the port facilities at Lagos and Port Harcourt in war.

In addition, Sandys wanted 'to retain permanently under British sovereignty a small area or areas' for 'an airfield or other military facilities'.³¹ On 11 September, the Cabinet agreed with the Defence Minister that the granting of independence should be made conditional on securing Britain's defence interests in Nigeria. Simultaneously, however, it was observed that a defence agreement would be 'more reliable and command greater international respect' if it was signed or ratified by the government of an independent Nigeria.³²

The first Nigerian reaction to the idea of a defence agreement was positive. In late September, the Colonial Secretary explained to the Federal Prime Minister of Nigeria that for 'the defence of the free world' Britain wanted to secure overflying rights, as well as air-staging and naval facilities through a defence agreement. Abubakar Tafawa Balewa from the Northern People's Congress (NPC) not only observed that the Nigerians intended 'to be full members of the Commonwealth doing all our duties', but also agreed that the defence agreement should be discussed during the constitutional conference. Yet during the meeting, Alan Lennox-Boyd had not raised the question of enclaves.³³ The Colonial Secretary remained opposed to enclaves, because he feared that pressing for them would not only undermine future relations with Nigeria, but, ultimately, also Britain's strategic interests in West Africa.³⁴ These political considerations were increasingly accepted in the Ministry of Defence.³⁵ In mid-October, Sandys agreed with Lennox-Boyd that an enclave was not an option. Instead, Britain was supposed to lease land adjacent to Kano airport for the potential development of air-staging facilities. Moreover, the outline of the defence agreement for discussions with the Nigerians was supposed to be more balanced, and also contain and reflect the Nigerian security requirements.³⁶

On 17 October, the Colonial Secretary met with the Federal Prime Minister and the three Regional Premiers of Nigeria to obtain their approval for a defence agreement. While he roughly presented the British wish list, he also emphasised that Britain wished to help the

Nigerians with their defence requirements after independence. In reaction, the Nigerians voiced their unanimous support for the agreement: Abubakar observed that 'Nigeria wanted to remain in the Commonwealth and contribute to its development and defence'; Obafemi Awolowo, the Western Premier, stressed that they wanted 'no agreements with the enemies of Britain', but 'to be a sister nation within the Commonwealth'; and both Nnamdi Azikiwe, the Eastern Premier, and Ahmadu Bello, the Northern Premier, fully endorsed what had been said in the meeting.³⁷ It was this agreement in principle, which allowed the Colonial Secretary to obtain from his colleagues in the Cabinet meeting of 22 October the authorisation to give the Nigerians a firm date for independence in autumn 1960.³⁸

The British wanted, however, a more binding commitment from the Nigerians. The Colonial Secretary thus drafted in cooperation with the Minister of Defence an outline of the agreement, which he then submitted to the Nigerian Prime Minister and Regional Premiers on 24 October. The outline contained provisions for mutual defence, British military assistance to Nigeria, reciprocal overflying rights and air-staging facilities, the lease of land to Britain for staging purposes, and the use of naval facilities at Lagos and Port Harcourt in time of emergency. These provisions, it stated, were to be elaborated into a formal defence agreement, which was to be concluded between the two governments on independence. The Nigerians endorsed the document without reservations and, on the suggestion of Azikiwe, they all initialled the outline. Informed about this diplomatic success, Macmillan congratulated Lennox-Boyd for his 'unflagging zeal'.³⁹ The British had reason to be satisfied, for it seemed that they had secured most of their Cold War defence interests in Nigeria for the time after independence without any major difficulties. The defence agreement had, however, yet to be drafted and agreed between the two parties. Moreover, with independence approaching, the Nigerians became less amenable and more demanding.

Nigerian Assertiveness

Until the defence agreement would be concluded upon Nigerian independence, it would take more than two years, during which the Nigerian position could change. This period did not only witness a further escalation of the Cold War and its definitive spread into the Third World, but also the rise of the Afro-Asian bloc, non-alignment, and Pan-Africanism. In the wake of the Bandung Conference in 1955, the newly independent and emerging nations of Asia and Africa increasingly gained a voice in international affairs. Moreover, under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, Josip Broz Tito, and Gamal Abdel Nasser, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) took shape and was officially launched at the Belgrade Conference in 1961. Meanwhile, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, also a founding member of the NAM, redoubled his efforts to promote his Pan-Africanist vision. Neutralism and Pan-Africanism thus appeared as appealing ideals and policy options that African and Asian nations also tried to defend in reaction to the Congo Crisis, which saw the involvement not only of the (former) colonial powers, but also of the superpowers. Unsurprisingly, formal defence relationships with the former colonial power, especially if it was a leading member of the western bloc, were thus increasingly discredited and seen as an obstacle to full independence.⁴⁰ The Nigerian leadership had to take these developments into account, and try to negotiate a defence agreement that would be acceptable to the Nigerian opposition and people. Meanwhile, British policymakers were aware of the defence agreement's potential unpopularity. In order to retain the goodwill of the Nigerians, and avoid pushing them into Soviet arms, they were thus willing to make strategic, financial, and material concessions – especially since Nigeria was seen as a source of support for the Western powers in West Africa, and Africa more generally.⁴¹

Following the initialling of the outline, the concerned departments in Whitehall began with the drafting of the defence agreement which, once ready, would be submitted to the

Nigerian ministers.⁴² British policymakers remained convinced about the strategic value of the defence agreement, and were confident that it would establish a firm basis for a close security relationship with Nigeria after independence. This also strengthened their belief that despite the rise of neutralist sentiments in and Soviet intrusions into Africa, Nigeria would remain firmly in the Western camp.⁴³ This positive outlook was strengthened by the largely pro-British attitude of the Nigerian elites, especially those from the North. London had particularly high hopes and expectations in the Nigerian Prime Minister, a Northerner, who adopted a strong anti-communist stance, wanted to cooperate in forestalling Soviet inroads into Nigeria, and was outspoken in his desire to maintain strong ties with Britain.⁴⁴ Abubakar believed that a formal defence relationship with Britain was the right way forward. In mid-August 1959, he announced to the Nigerian House of Representatives that upon independence Nigeria would enter into a defence agreement with Britain.⁴⁵ In light of the foreseeable weakness of Nigeria's armed forces, rising Communist and Soviet influence in Ghana, Liberia and Guinea, as well as the disintegration of French West Africa, the Nigerian Prime Minister was worried about his country's security and territorial integrity. In January 1960, he expressed these fears to the British Prime Minister during the latter's Africa tour.⁴⁶ Macmillan took the Nigerian Prime Minister's concerns seriously. He was aware that Britain mainly intended to cover its own strategic requirements through the defence agreement. But he wanted to know from his government what could be done to help maintain Nigeria's integrity after independence.⁴⁷ The assessment by the Joint Planning Staff and the Chiefs of Staff in reaction to this intervention concluded that Nigeria was relatively safe, and that there was mainly a localised threat to Nigerian security from Cameroun through the British Cameroons. Consequently, from a security perspective, Nigeria only required limited military aid.⁴⁸ In light of Nigeria's relative strategic importance as a means, rather than an end, it is not surprising that British military planners were reluctant to provide military aid. Moreover,

the limited financial, manpower, material, and logistical resources were already stretched thin between the continental European and global defence commitments, as well as the nuclear deterrent, and disputed between the three service departments.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, from a political perspective, British military assistance to Nigeria became increasingly important, and thus more substantial.

Already in August 1959, in commenting on an early draft of the defence agreement, the Governor-General of Nigeria observed that it should be more balanced. In order to retain Nigerian goodwill, it would have to contain less on Britain's requirements, and more on British military assistance to Nigeria.⁵⁰ Yet by March 1960 it became clear that the problem was more profound. In light of the growing unpopularity of the defence agreement among the Nigerian opposition and people, the Governor-General questioned whether the Nigerian leaders would remain committed to the defence agreement. He believed that Abubakar and the Sardauna, the Northern Premier, 'would wish to stick to their word'. But he was not sure whether Azikiwe and the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), and Awolowo and the Action Group (AG) were still on board. James Robertson thus stressed that the draft defence agreement had to be 'as simple and uncontroversial as possible, or it may easily be made an excuse by the Nigerian Ministers for trying to back out of the whole idea'.⁵¹ These worries were taken seriously in London,⁵² without, however, questioning the defence agreement. The British intended to capitalise on Abubakar's fears for Nigerian security, and tried to sweeten the pill by emphasising the military and defence assistance Nigeria would receive.⁵³ In late March, Macmillan himself wrote to the Nigerian Prime Minister on these lines.⁵⁴

The draft agreement remained, however, entirely based on the 1958 outline. Rather than reducing the benefits that would accrue to Britain from the agreement, the British even added a clause on aircraft tropicalisation trials to the draft that was finally sent to Nigerian

Ministers for consideration on 31 March.⁵⁵ Abubakar continued to defend the agreement in the Nigerian House of Representatives by emphasising the military assistance that would be gained from it to build up the Nigerian Armed Forces. But aware of the agreement's increasing unpopularity, he gave the assurance that his government would not enter into it without the House's approval.⁵⁶ The main controversial issue of the defence agreement was that it allowed Britain to retain and, if desired, establish military bases in Nigeria. The British thus foresaw difficulties on this particular point.⁵⁷ Yet the Nigerian reaction to the draft agreement went well beyond the issue of bases.

In an attempt to rebalance the agreement, the Nigerian Ministers made a number of demands for revision. First, and as expected, they were against the lease of land, because it would play into the hands of the opposition. Moreover, and probably by playing on British fears of Soviet inroads into Africa, they argued that the leasing of land would 'provide opportunities for subversive elements to clamour for financial aid from undesirable quarters', and could thus lead to the overthrow of their government. Second, they were not anymore willing to grant unrestricted access to air-staging and port facilities. In times of emergency, Britain would have to seek the agreement of the Nigerian government, because it was feared that these facilities could be used for an intervention in one of Britain's remaining African dependencies. Third, the results of the aircraft tropicalisation trials should be made available to the Nigerian Government. Finally, in order to build up their armed forces, the Nigerians asked for substantial provisions on British military assistance.⁵⁸ In making these demands, the Governor-General observed, the Nigerians were adapting to the pressure from the opposition and the street. Against the background of South Africa's racist policies and French atom bomb tests in the Sahara, anti-colonial sentiments ran high, and Pan-Africanism and neutralism were on the rise. According to Robertson, this situation could be exploited by communist forces.⁵⁹

Whitehall was alarmed by the Nigerian Ministers' 'radical' demands for revision.⁶⁰ Yet in light of the political mood in Nigeria, and in order to retain Nigerian goodwill and help protect Abubakar's government, the Colonial Secretary advised Macmillan 'to drop the request for the lease of land and rely on their good faith for the use of their own airfields'. The Prime Minister believed that this was 'not very satisfactory, but it may be the best we can get'.⁶¹ Moreover, the concerned departments largely concurred with Macleod. The service departments and the Chiefs of Staff were willing to drop the clauses on the lease of land and naval facilities. Meanwhile, they were aware that it would be very difficult to get truly unrestricted overflying and staging rights, and they would ultimately have to rely on Nigerian goodwill. The Chiefs of Staff also recommended 'that the Agreement should emphasise those things which the United Kingdom were providing for Nigeria and not create an impression that the Agreement was one-sided'.⁶² Thus believing that the agreement was in Nigeria's own interest, the Minister of Defence remained confident that Britain should nevertheless 'be able to strike a reasonable bargain'.⁶³ The Chancellor of the Exchequer was already less optimistic. Although he did not question the need to compromise, he was against military aid to Nigeria 'when we are getting so little out of the Defence Agreement'.⁶⁴ Finally, the Foreign Secretary emphasised that the Nigerians should not be forced into a defence agreement that 'they considered politically dangerous', and that 'might compromise Nigeria's standing amongst independent African states, and hence her ability to exert what we hope will be a moderating influence on them'.⁶⁵ The British were thus willing to make concessions. But in exchange of military aid, they still wanted to secure their main strategic requirement, i.e. overflying and staging rights.⁶⁶

In mid-May 1960, the Colonial Secretary, the Defence Minister, representatives from their Ministries and the Commonwealth Relations Office, as well as the Governor-General of Nigeria met with the Nigerian Ministers to reach an understanding on the defence agreement.

The Regional Premiers, the Federal Prime Minister and his Ministers still believed in the advantages of the defence agreement. Especially Abubakar remained convinced that Nigeria required military assistance from Britain. This ultimately allowed the British to find a compromise with the Nigerians that secured the main strategic requirements. After the British had dropped the clauses on leasing land and naval facilities, both delegations concurred that the agreement would provide for mutual defence, reciprocal overflying and staging rights, as well as British help with the training, equipment and supply of the Nigerian Armed Forces.⁶⁷ It was also agreed that the details and exact wording of the agreement would be ironed out between Nigerian and British representatives in the coming months.⁶⁸

The British service departments and the Treasury were reluctant to make extensive and costly commitments on military assistance to Nigeria. But in order to smooth the passage of the defence agreement in the Nigerian Parliament, Whitehall was willing to make additional concessions.⁶⁹ During the final negotiations that were held in London in June, the Nigerians were able to extract from the British major commitments on military training, seconded personnel, and equipment.⁷⁰ In order to secure the support of Nigerian parliamentarians and to retain Nigeria, despite its leaning towards non-alignment,⁷¹ firmly in the western camp, the British were willing to make additional concessions even thereafter.⁷² Fearing that the Nigerians could turn to the Soviet Union, the British agreed to make available more financial assistance for the build-up of the Nigerian Armed Forces.⁷³ At the expense of its military dimension, the Defence Agreement became increasingly political. It was not anymore just about securing Britain's strategic requirements, but more and more about keeping the Nigerians in the western camp.

The provisions on military assistance were a strong argument in favour of the agreement when it was debated in the Nigerian House of Representatives after independence on 19 November. The charges from the opposition were led by Awolowo from the AG, who

had originally co-initialled the 1958 outline. He mainly argued that the defence agreement contained a hidden neo-colonial agenda which would allow for the establishment of British bases in Nigeria, and accused the government of being anglophile and pro-western. In reaction, the government parties, the NPC and the NCNC, closed their ranks, and the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Agreement passed with 166 to 39 votes.⁷⁴ A few days later, it was also passed by the Nigerian Senate. Even though the opposition criticised that the agreement ‘implied a greater entanglement’ with Britain, and ‘unrestricted overflying provided espionage facilities’, the discussion was less animated than in the House.⁷⁵

Consequently, the British and Nigerian governments had succeeded in bringing the defence agreement through. Yet in light of the opposition to the agreement in Nigeria, Britain had to make major strategic concessions for political, Cold War-related reasons. In order to get the Nigerian political class on board, and avoiding to push the Nigerians away from the West into Soviet arms, the British abandoned or reduced some of their strategic requirements, and committed themselves to help in the build-up of the Nigerian Armed Forces. Consequently, it was Whitehall’s Cold War-driven and increasingly political approach to the Defence Agreement that allowed the Nigerians to secure substantial military assistance from Britain. It was questionable, however, whether the pro-British government of Abubakar would be able to maintain a formal defence relationship with the former imperial power in light of continued criticism.

The Primacy of Politics

The question was whether Britain had achieved a Pyrrhic victory. On the one hand, in comparison to the outline of 1958, the defence agreement had lost a lot of its substance. On the other hand, the opposition to the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Pact became increasingly vociferous and severe. Paradoxically, for limited strategic gains, the British found themselves

in political difficulties. The direct target of the opposition was, however, the Nigerian Prime Minister and his government. In addition to the standing of the British, the agreement thus also undermined the position of their friend Abubakar, on whom they counted to keep Nigeria in the western orbit. Consequently, it was questionable whether the defence agreement would be politically sustainable.

The Nigerian Prime Minister still believed that the defence agreement was in Nigeria's interest, and continued to defend it against the continued charges from the opposition, led by the AG.⁷⁶ The attacks did not, however, remain limited to the Nigerian Parliament. In late November 1960, around 800 students descended into the streets of Lagos to demonstrate against the agreement. They carried placards that read, among other things, 'Away with Anglo-Balewa Pact', 'Down with Colonial Mentality', and 'Keep us out of NATO'. The demonstration turned violent when the students manhandled Nigerian Ministers and broke into Cabinet offices and the Houses of Parliament. Eventually, they were allowed to present a petition to the Governor-General, according to which the defence agreement ran contrary to the foreign policy of non-alignment and thus weakened Nigeria's international role. For the British it was evident that the AG and Awolowo with his 'inflammatory speeches' were behind the demonstrations. The Nigerian Defence Minister, Muhammadu Ribadu, went a step further, and insinuated interference by Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana.⁷⁷ In light of Awolowo's recent visit to Ghana, this was not unlikely. Moreover, through his strong advocacy for non-alignment and a more radical foreign policy, the AG leader attracted the discrete support of the Soviet Union.⁷⁸

In the wake of the student protests, Abubakar's Government continued in its attempt to explain and justify the defence pact to the Nigerian people. In a broadcast speech, Ribadu stressed in particular that Nigeria would not have to go to war if Britain did, there were no provisions for British bases, the overflying and staging rights were reciprocal, and there

would be substantial military assistance for the Nigerian Armed Forces.⁷⁹ In fear of further mass demonstrations, the Government also banned all public meetings and processions in Lagos for the two weeks prior to the official signing of the defence agreement in early January 1961.⁸⁰ Meanwhile, it prevented the British from holding tropicalisation trials in Lagos, which would have given the opposition additional ammunition.⁸¹ But despite these measures, the situation further escalated. The most militant opposition to the defence pact and Abubakar's pro-western foreign policy came from the Nigerian Youth Congress (NYC). Founded by former Zikists and led by the Soviet-trained medical practitioner Tunji Otegbeye, this organisation rapidly attracted the interest of the Soviet Union. In mid-February 1961, the NYC staged a riot in response to the death of Patrice Lumumba and against the defence pact. Although the Nigerian Government managed to quell the riot, the defence agreement with Britain remained highly contested.⁸²

The hostility to the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Agreement was inopportune for London. British policymakers saw Africa almost exclusively through the prism of the Cold War, which was at this time still of a largely ideological, political, and economic nature in Africa, at least in West Africa. By spring 1961, they had become particularly worried about the eastern bloc's inroads into Africa and, more specifically, West Africa.⁸³ Rising African nationalism, the increasing appeal of non-alignment, and Pan-Africanism seemed to have benefited the Soviet Union, but undermined the position of the western powers. In this situation, the West had to be 'careful not to provide evidence for charges against "neo-colonialism"', which would further weaken its influence in the region.⁸⁴ Yet according to the Nigerian opposition and other critics in Africa and the East, exactly this evidence was provided by the defence pact. The UK High Commissioner to Nigeria, Antony Head, was entirely aware of this problem. In early autumn 1961, he observed that the defence agreement had a harmful impact on Anglo-Nigerian relations, and thus suggested to examine whether it

could be ‘quietly buried’. The agreement, Head argued, was an ‘embarrassment’ for the Nigerians, and ‘useless’ for Britain, since the staging facilities could not be used for operations against Africans.⁸⁵ According to Head’s deputy, despite its dislike for the pact, the Nigerian Government was ‘determined to stand loyally by it’, especially since it did not want to give in to Awolowo. Consequently, the suggestion for abrogation had to come from London.⁸⁶

The suggestion from the UK High Commissioner initiated a political process, which prepared the ground for the abrogation of the defence agreement. The idea of abrogation was opposed by the Air Ministry which, because of the overflying and staging rights, was particularly concerned. Despite the defence agreement’s limited practical value, it was still considered better than nothing. Moreover, changing circumstances could bring about a more permissive Nigerian attitude, the strategic usefulness of Kano was not limited to Africa, and abrogation would set a precedent that could have a negative impact on other and future defence agreements.⁸⁷ The Air Ministry was relatively lonely with its concerns, and only received limited support from the Ministry of Defence, which feared that abrogation would create a ‘risky precedent’. The other interested departments increasingly shared Head’s concerns that the agreement played into the hands of the Communists by discrediting Britain and the Nigerian Government.⁸⁸ The Commonwealth Relations Office thus put forward the idea to free Nigeria of ‘the Imperial Dogcollar’ through a bilateral declaration that the agreement had outlived its military usefulness. Meanwhile, the essential strategic requirements, such as overflying and staging rights, could be secured through an informal exchange of letters.⁸⁹ Moreover, and even though archival sources do not point into this direction, it could have been that the increasing scepticism towards Britain’s ability to maintain its role East of Suez indirectly decreased the importance of the Central African air route, and thus of Nigeria.⁹⁰ Finally, the armed forces’ ability to mount expeditionary

operations with the help of staging posts and overflying rights was never sufficient to sustain Britain's global role as foreseen by the Sandys White Paper.⁹¹

But policymakers in London had not yet entirely made up their mind, as Abubakar informed Head in early December that 'he would very much like to get rid of' the defence pact. In view of the Lagos Conference of Heads of African and Malagasy States of late January 1962, he feared that the agreement would be used by the more 'radical' Casablanca states to attack him and his government.⁹² The issue had thus reached an unprecedented level of urgency.⁹³ Although the Air Ministry reiterated its concerns, it began to accommodate itself to the idea of abrogation and that it would have to be satisfied with a less formal arrangement to secure its strategic requirements.⁹⁴ The Foreign Office, by contrast, strongly advocated the idea of abrogation and argued that 'the withdrawal of the Agreement would help to improve our "image" in the foreign countries of Africa'. In drawing a comparison with France, the Foreign Office also observed that even the French would come under increasing pressure for their defence facilities in Africa, and would eventually have to give them up.⁹⁵ Even though this prediction would prove to be wrong, it became increasingly clear to policymakers in Whitehall that the strategic reasons against, were outweighed by the political reasons in favour of abrogation.⁹⁶ It also seemed that it would not create a negative precedent for Britain's defence agreement with Malaya.⁹⁷ Finally, in early January 1962, also the Chiefs of Staff accepted that from a political perspective abrogation was inevitable, however reluctantly.⁹⁸

The die was cast. Minister of Defence Harold Watkinson and Sandys, one of the main architects of the defence agreement and who was now Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, agreed that abrogation was desirable. But before committing the British Government to abrogation, they wanted from Abubakar a 'firm assurance' that 'in all normal circumstances' they would retain their privileges, in particular overflying and staging rights.

In return, Britain would continue to offer Nigeria military assistance.⁹⁹ The Nigerian Prime Minister was absolutely willing to give this assurance. Suddenly, however, he wished to postpone the abrogation. Abubakar feared that if the announcement was made so shortly before the Lagos Conference, it would be interpreted as ‘window dressing’.¹⁰⁰ Sandys was willing to comply, but a leakage about the abrogation in Nigeria nevertheless rendered an early announcement necessary.¹⁰¹ In all urgency, on 20 January, the UK High Commissioner obtained from the Nigerian Prime Minister a written assurance that in exchange for military assistance Britain would continue to enjoy overflying and staging rights at Kano ‘in all normal circumstances [...] in accordance with practice between Commonwealth countries’.¹⁰² Finally, Abubakar and Head also agreed on a joint statement, which was released to the press of both countries on 22 January. It stated that in light of the unfounded anxieties surrounding the defence agreement, the British and Nigerian Governments had decided to abrogate it. Simultaneously, however, they would ‘endeavour to afford to the other at all times such assistance and facilities in defence matters as are appropriate between parties in the Commonwealth’.¹⁰³

The Air Ministry, which had not been kept in the loop and would have wanted first the Defence Committee to be consulted, was strongly irritated.¹⁰⁴ Yet the British and Nigerian Governments had managed to get rid of a thorny issue in Anglo-Nigerian relations, which undermined both their positions in Africa. Moreover, Britain retained its overflying and staging rights, and Nigeria continued to receive military assistance – at least for the time being. Nevertheless, much harm had been done, and the Nigerian opposition rightly alleged that the defence agreement had not been truly abrogated, and claimed that ‘there was a secret understanding of an equally sinister nature as the original Pact itself’.¹⁰⁵

Conclusion

The short-lived Anglo-Nigerian Defence Agreement was not an imperial, but a Cold War design. More importantly, however, it highlights an interesting paradox. Britain's strategic requirements in the global Cold War – whether it was for limited hot wars or a worldwide conflagration – and desire to keep Nigeria firmly in the western orbit, created for British policymakers the need for a defence agreement. Yet this strategy backfired. In the still largely ideological, political, and economic Cold War in Africa, the defence pact came to be seen as a neo-colonial tool to tie Nigeria's destiny to the West. This increasingly undermined the hitherto close Anglo-Nigerian relations, as well as British and western influence in West Africa. It thus became politically desirable to abrogate the defence agreement. In Britain's post-imperial Cold War grand strategy, political interests conflicted and, ultimately, outweighed purely military-strategic interests – at least if they were not deemed absolutely essential as in the Nigerian case.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, despite abrogation, Britain was able to retain limited overflying and staging rights, and the sustainability of its global role was increasingly questioned in Whitehall.

The British benefited during the episode of the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Agreement from a cooperative anglophile and pro-western Nigerian leadership. The Federal Prime Minister, from the traditionally pro-British Northern Region, his Ministers, and the Regional Premiers were all in favour of strong security ties with the former imperial power. They believed that the support of Britain was necessary to guarantee the country's security immediately after independence, and to build up the Nigerian Armed Forces. In light of Britain's increasing awareness of the potential unpopularity of the agreement, they were also able to extract major strategic, material, and financial concessions from London. But in light of the increasing Cold War pressures on Africa, the rise of non-alignment and neutralism, the defence pact began to pose a threat to the government of Abubakar and to Nigeria's international standing. The Nigerian Prime Minister thus wanted 'to get rid of' it.

Nevertheless, in the Cold War world of the early 1960s, he was able to maintain Nigeria's access to British military assistance.

The British were not only willing to continue to provide military assistance to Nigeria in return for overflying and staging rights, but they also feared that the Nigerians could turn to other potential 'benefactors', notably the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, the embryonic Nigerian Armed Forces still had to be built up, and as they were modelled on their British counterparts, Britain was the obvious source of support. The Anglo-Nigerian defence relationship thus survived the abrogation of the agreement.¹⁰⁷ It had, however, been downgraded to an informal level, and in line with its pretended policy of non-alignment, Nigeria increasingly diversified its sources for military assistance. Finally, the controversy surrounding the defence pact had considerably weakened the previously special relationship between the two countries.¹⁰⁸ Anglo-Nigerian relations would never again be so close.

Consequently, in comparison to the French, the British did not succeed to maintain the same level of intimacy with their former colonies and, especially, to establish long-lasting defence relationships. The reasons for France's success are obviously manifold and complex. But in general, and if compared to the British experience, it can be argued that the French attached much more importance to maintaining their influence in Sub-Saharan Africa, which was seen by General de Gaulle and his acolytes as a major pillar of the country's grandeur. Therefore, Paris was willing to do whatever was necessary to retain its *pré carré*, and thus pledged substantial financial and military aid to its former colonies, and made extensive use of intelligence, covert operations, and psychological action. Admittedly, the British also operated behind the scenes in Africa, as Calder Walton has shown.¹⁰⁹ Yet they never attached sufficient importance to Sub-Saharan Africa to throw in their already substantially declined clout. Simultaneously, and as this article has illustrated, London also faced more complex and ambiguous negotiation partners. Although generally in favour of strong defence ties with the

British, the Nigerian leadership had to take into account different political and regional groups, which in turn were exposed to popular, anti-colonial pressure. The former French colonies in West Africa by contrast, with the notable exception of Guinea's Sékou Touré, were led by Francophile and largely authoritarian leaders, who would not let more radical anti-colonial elements prevent them from establishing a close and exclusive security relationship with Paris.¹¹⁰ France's continued security role in Francophone Africa, and Britain's military withdrawal from the continent, thus resulted from the policies and actions of both the metropolises and the newly independent African states, which had gained unprecedented leverage through the globalisation of the Cold War.

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Notes

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- ¹ See e.g.: Chipman, *French Power in Africa*; Charbonneau, *France and the New Imperialism*; and, more recently, Charbonneau, "Franco-African security relations," 107-119.
- ² Percox, *Britain, Kenya*, 210.
- ³ Clayton, "The Military Relations," *passim*; Crocker, "Military Dependence," *passim*.
- ⁴ Idang, "The Politics," 227-251; Ojedokun, "The Anglo-Nigerian Entente," 210-233.
- ⁵ Akinyeye, "Nigeria's Defense," 871-880; Aluko, *Essays on Nigerian Foreign Policy*; Clayton, "The Military Relations,"; Jackson, "British-African Defence," 351-376; Darwin, *The Empire Project*.
- ⁶ Tijani, *Britain, Leftist Nationalists*, 91-94.
- ⁷ Thomas, *Fight or Flight*, xiv.
- ⁸ Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*, xiv, 261; Walton, *Empire of Secrets*, *passim*.
- ⁹ On the Cold War in Africa see Byrne, "Africa's Cold War," 101-123.
- ¹⁰ Kent, "Decolonisation and Empire," 265.
- ¹¹ Thomas, *Fight or Flight*, 3-4.
- ¹² Bradley, "Decolonization, the global South, and the Cold War, 1919-1962," 465.
- ¹³ Kent, *The Internationalization of Colonialism*, *passim*; Kent, *British Imperial Strategy*, *passim*; Clayton, "'Deceptive Might'," 294.
- ¹⁴ French, "Duncan Sandys," *passim*. See also: Crocker, "Military Dependence," 281; Darwin, *The Empire Project*, 253, 256; Dockrill, *British Defence since 1945*, 68-70; 47-48; Greenwood, *Britain and the Cold War*, 168; Jackson, "British-African Defence," 353; Thomas, *Fight or Flight*, 280-281.
- ¹⁵ Brendon, *The Decline and Fall*, 538-539, 543; Darwin, *The Empire Project*, 614, 616; Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*, 272-275; Thomas, *Fight or Flight*, 267, 275. For more information on Nigeria's road to independence see Falola and Heaton, *A History of Nigeria*, ch. 6.
- ¹⁶ CPC (57) 27, 'Future constitutional development in the colonies': report (CO print, GEN 174/012) of the officials' committee (chairman Sir N Brook) (CO(0)(57)5), 1 May 1957, in Hyam, *The Conservative Government Part I*, 7, 9.
- ¹⁷ CC 42(57)4, 'Nigeria': Cabinet conclusions on constitutional advance, 22 May 1957, in Hyam, *The Conservative Government Part I*, 346.
- ¹⁸ JP(57)93(Final), Future Constitutional Development in the Colonies, Report by the Joint Planning Staff, 26 July 1957, The National Archives, Kew (UK) (hereafter TNA), DEFE 6/42.

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- ¹⁹ The other centres of communication mentioned in the report were Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Kenya, Uganda, Aden, and Ascension Island.
- ²⁰ JP(57)94(Final), Strategic Facilities in British Territories Likely to Achieve Independence, Report by the Joint Planning Staff, 27 August 1957, TNA, DEFE 6/42.
- ²¹ CPC (57) 30, 'Future constitutional development in the colonies': memorandum for Cabinet Colonial Policy Committee by Sir N Brook, 6 September 1957, in Hyam, *The Conservative Government Part I*, 36.
- ²² C.O.S. (58) 42, Defence Requirements in West Africa, Chiefs of Staff Committee, Note by the Secretary, 17 February 1958; Annex to COS(58)53, Defence Requirements in West Africa; JP(57)163(Final), Defence Requirements in West Africa, Report by the Joint Planning Staff, 5 February 1958; Annex to JP(57)163(Final), TNA, DEFE 11/228.
- ²³ JPS(57)143(Final), Review of Defence Machinery Concerned with Africa, Report by the Joint Planning Staff, 14 February 1958, TNA, DEFE 6/43.
- ²⁴ JP(58)56(Final), World-Wide Requirements for British Bases and Alternative Potential Bases, Report by the Joint Planning Staff, 9 May 1958, TNA, DEFE 6/50.
- ²⁵ [Defence]: minute by A E Emanuel raising the possibility of a defence pact, 13 May 1958, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 475-476; Gough (Ministry of Defence, MoD) to Hanna (Admiralty), 10 June 1958, TNA, DEFE 7/1482.
- ²⁶ Lennox-Boyd to Eastwood (both Colonial Office, CO), 13 July 1958, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 495.
- ²⁷ World-Requirements for British Bases and Alternative Potential Bases, McLeod to Sandys (MoD), 16 July 1958, TNA, DEFE 7/1482.
- ²⁸ Gough (MoD) to Cooper (Air Ministry, AM), 28 July 1958, TNA, DEFE 7/1482.
- ²⁹ [Nigeria]: minute on political situation and constitutional proposals (C(58)171 & C(58)213), Allen (CRO), 21 October 1958, in Hyam, *The Conservative Government Part I*, 352; Powell to Sandys (MoD), 1 September 1958, TNA, DEFE 7/1482.
- ³⁰ Cooper (AM) to Gough (MoD), 22 August 1958, TNA, DEFE 7/1482; Eastwood (CO) to Robertson (Nigeria), 29 August 1958, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 530-531.
- ³¹ Sandys (MoD) to Lennox-Boyd (CO), in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 538-539; Chiefs of Staff Committee Extract from Minutes of C.O.S.(58) 79th Meeting, 9 September 1958, TNA, AIR 19/954.
- ³² CC 71(58)5, 'Nigeria': Cabinet conclusions on resumption of constitutional conference, 11 September 1958, in Hyam, *The Conservative Government Part I*, 353-354.

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- ³³ [London constitutional conference]: note by Mr Lennox-Boyd reporting on his meeting with Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, 24 September 1958, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 547-548.
- ³⁴ Gibbon to Dickson (both MoD), 10 October 1958, TNA, DEFE 7/1482.
- ³⁵ Dickson to Sandys (both MoD), 14 October 1958, DEFE 7/1482.
- ³⁶ 'Defence requirements in Nigeria': CO note of a meeting between Mr Lennox-Boyd and Mr Duncan Sandys on 14 Oct 1958, 16 October 1958, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 562-563.
- ³⁷ Note, Howard-Drake (CO), 17 October 1958, TNA, DEFE 7/1482.
- ³⁸ C(58), 'Nigeria': Cabinet memorandum by Mr Lennox-Boyd on progress of constitutional talks, 20 October 1958, in Hyam, *The Conservative Government Part I*, 356; CC 76(58)4, [Date of independence]: Cabinet conclusions agreeing to autumn 1960 for Nigerian independence, 22 October 1958, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 569-570.
- ³⁹ [Defence agreement]: CO note of a meeting on Nigerian defence held at Lancaster House, *Annex*: Outline of proposed defence agreement, 24 October 1958, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 571-574.
- ⁴⁰ Wyss, Hanhimäki, Bott, and Schaufelbuehl, "Introduction"; Schaufelbuehl, Bott, Hanhimäki, and Wyss, "Non-Alignment"; Nwaubani, "Eisenhower," 599-622; Namikas, *Battleground Africa*. See also, for instance, Westad, *The Global Cold War*; McMahon, *The Cold War*; Mišković, Fischer-Tiné, and Boškovska, *The Non-Aligned Movement*.
- ⁴¹ AF (59) 2, [British influence after independence]: Cabinet (Official) Africa Committee minutes, 22 January 1959; [Political situation]: letter from S J G Fingland to Sir G Laithwaite assessing developments since the London conference, 9 February 1959; AF (59) 5, 'Prospects for the African territories for which the Colonial Office is responsible': CO memorandum for the Cabinet (official) Africa Committee, 20 February 1959; [Nigerian foreign policy]: letter from A W Snelling to C G Eastwood on the future foreign policy of Nigeria, Enclosure, 23 March 1959, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 586-588; 591-592; 592-596; 597-602.
- ⁴² Lennox-Boyd (CO) to Officer Administering the Government of the Federation of Nigeria, 2 December 1958; Lennox-Boyd (CO) to Robertson (Nigeria), 24 March 1959; Robertson (Nigeria) to Lennox-Boyd (CO), 20 April 1959, TNA, DEFE 7/1482.
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- ⁴⁴ [Nigerian foreign policy]: letter from S J G Fingland to Sir G Laithwaite on Soviet representation in Nigeria, 1 July 1959; [Nigerian foreign policy]: letter from M E Allen to F G K Gallagher (FO) concerning Soviet

diplomatic representation in Nigeria, 5 August 1959; [Soviet contacts]: letter from E C Burr to R S Faber (FO) on contacts with Soviet representations, Enclosure: 'Contacts with Soviet Bloc diplomatic missions': Nigerian government note, 25 August 1959, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 607-609; 614-615; 629-630.

⁴⁵ 'The Winning of Independence', 15 August 1958, in Balewa, *Nigeria Speaks*, 32.

⁴⁶ [Macmillan's visit to Nigeria]: FO record of a conversation between the UK and Nigerian prime ministers at Lagos, 12 January 1960, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 645-646.

⁴⁷ [Defence agreement]: inward telegram no 25 from Mr Macmillan to Cabinet colleagues on discussions with Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa concerning the future defence of Nigeria, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 647.

⁴⁸ C.O.S.(60)39, Chiefs of Staff Committee, Nigeria, Note by the Secretary; Annex 'A' to C.O.S.(60)39, Nigeria, Memorandum from the Chief of the Defence Staff to the Minister of Defence; Annex 'B' to C.O.S.(60)39, Nigeria, 19 February 1960; Chiefs of Staff Committee, Confidential Annex to C.O.S.(60)11th Meeting, 16 February 1960; JP(60)13(Final), Nigeria, Report by the Joint Planning Staff; Annexes 'A' and 'B' to JP(60)13(Final), 12 February 1960, TNA, DEFE 11/228.

⁴⁹ See, for instance, Baylis, *British Defence Policy*, 1989, *passim*; Johnson, *Defence by Ministry*, *passim*.

⁵⁰ [Defence agreement]: letter from Sir J Robertson to A Emanuel on the need to improve the benefits for Nigeria under the proposed defence agreement, 13 August 1959, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 626-628.

⁵¹ Robertson (Nigeria) to Eastwood (CO), 1 March 1960, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 670.

⁵² Hilton Poynton (CO) to Edward Playfair (MoD), 8 March 1960, TNA, AIR 2/15386.

⁵³ Bishop (MoD) to Macmillan, 8 March 1960, TNA, CAB 21/4430.

⁵⁴ Macmillan to Abubakar, 24 March 1960, TNA, CAB 21/4430.

⁵⁵ CO to Robertson (Nigeria); Macleod (CO) to Robertson (Nigeria); Note on the Draft Defence Agreement Prepared by Her Majesty's Government and Proposed for Conclusion on the Achievement of Independence by the Federation of Nigeria, Annexe 'C', 31 March 1960, TNA, AIR 2/15386.

⁵⁶ 'The Anglo-Nigerian Defence Agreement', 12 April 1960, in Balewa, *Nigeria Speaks*, 50-51.

⁵⁷ [London conference]: minute by C G Eastwood on the agenda for the forthcoming London talks, 13 April 1960, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 670.

⁵⁸ Robertson (Nigeria) to Macleod (CO); Annex; Goffrey (Nigeria) to Eastwood (CO), 3 May 1960, TNA, AIR 2/15386.

⁵⁹ [Political situation]: despatch no 31 from Sir J Robertson to Mr Macleod on the political situation in Nigeria, 27 April 1960, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 688-689.

⁶⁰ [Defence agreement]: letter from R J Vile to C W Wright (MOD) on proposed revisions by Nigerian ministers to the draft defence agreement, 6 May 1960, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 700-701.

⁶¹ Macleod (CO) to Macmillan, 9 May 1960, TNA, CAB 21/4430.

⁶² de Zulueta (Prime Minister's Office) to Sabatini (MoD), 10 May 1960; Lloyd-Jones (Admiralty) to Godfrey (MoD), 11 May 1960; Ward (AM) to Macmillan, 11 May 1960, TNA, AIR 2/15386; 'Nigerian Defence Agreement': COS Committee minutes (COS 32(60)3), 12 May 1960, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 703-704, and TNA, DEFE 4/126.

⁶³ Watkinson (MoD) to Macmillan, 12 May 1960, TNA, AIR 19/954.

⁶⁴ Heathcoat-Amory (Treasury) to Macmillan, 13 May 1960, TNA, CAB 21/4430.

⁶⁵ Selwyn-Lloyd (Foreign Office, FO) to Macmillan, 13 May 1960, TNA, AIR 19/954.

⁶⁶ Discussion with Secretary of State for the Colonies on Proposed Nigerian Defence Agreement on 17th May 1960, MoD, 16 May 1960, TNA, DEFE 7/1483.

⁶⁷ Note of discussion held in the Secretary of State's Room, Colonial Office, at 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday, 17th May, 1960, 18 May 1960, TNA, DEFE 7/1483; [Constitutional discussions]: CO report on the London talks, 1 May 1950, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 706-707.

⁶⁸ [Defence agreement]: letter from D W S Hunt to A W Snelling reporting on the decisions of the London talks, 24 May 1960, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 708-710.

⁶⁹ Robertson (Nigeria) to Macleod (CO), 29 July 1960; Record of Meeting Held in Commonwealth Relations Office on Thursday the 21st July at 3 P.M., CO, TNA, AIR 2/15386.

⁷⁰ Nigerian Defence Agreement, Note by the Nigerian Delegation, 10 June 1960; Nigeria Defence Agreement, Minutes of Meeting held in Conference Room 'E', Ministry of Defence, S.W.1, on Wednesday, 8th June, 1960 at 11.00 a.m., Bennell (MoD), 14 June 1960; Nigeria Defence Agreement, Minutes of Meeting held in Conference Room 'B', Ministry of Defence, Storey's Gate, S.W.1, on Thursday, 9th June, 1960 at 9.45 a.m., Bennell (MoD), 15 June 1960; Nigerian Defence Agreement, Minutes of a Meeting held in Conference Room 'F', Ministry of Defence, S.W.1, on Monday 13th June, 1960, at 10.00 a.m., Bennell (MoD), 17 June 1960, TNA, DEFE 7/1483.

⁷¹ 'A Policy for Foreign Affairs', 20 June 1960, in Balewa, *Nigeria Speaks*, 56-58.

⁷² [Defence agreement]: minutes by Lord Home and D W S Hunt, 18 July 1960; Minute by A Emanuel on the revised terms of the defence agreement, 22 July 1960, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 722-723; 723-726.

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- ⁷³ [Defence agreement]: minute by Mr Duncan Sandys to Mr Macmillan on a proposal to meet Nigerian military training costs in the UK, Enclosure: 'Nigerian defence': CRO note, 26 August 1960, in Lynn, *Nigeria, Part II*, 731-733.
- ⁷⁴ Hung (Nigeria) to Price (CRO); Defence Agreement – Debate in Nigerian Federal House of Representatives, Bromhead (Nigeria), 22 November 1960, TNA, DEFE 7/1484.
- ⁷⁵ Head (Lagos) to CRO, 25 November 1960, TNA, DEFE 7/1484.
- ⁷⁶ 'The Opposition and Foreign Affairs', 25 November 1960, in Balewa, *Nigeria Speaks*, 73.
- ⁷⁷ Lagos to CRO, 29 November 1960; 1 December 1960, TNA, DEFE 7/1484.
- ⁷⁸ Matusevich, *No Easy Row*, 64.
- ⁷⁹ Broadcast Speech by the Minister of Defence, Alhaji Muhammadu Ribadu, M.P., on the Defence Agreement, Federal Ministry of Information, 15 December 1960, TNA, DEFE 7/1484.
- ⁸⁰ Head (Lagos) to CRO, 29 December 1960, TNA, DEFE 7/1484.
- ⁸¹ Lagos to CRO, 6 January 1961; Macmillan to Sandys (CRO), 8 January 1961, TNA, CAB 21/5521.
- ⁸² Tijani, *Britain, Leftist Nationalists*, 97; Ojedokun, "The Anglo-Nigerian Entente," 222-223; Matusevich, *No Easy Row*, 68.
- ⁸³ On the Soviet Union, West Africa and the Cold War see: Mazov, *A Distant Front*; Legvold, *Soviet Policy in West Africa*.
- ⁸⁴ [West Africa's relations with the western powers]: minutes of opening discussion at a meeting of British representatives and officials (chairman, Sir R Stevens), 16 May 1961, in Hyam, *The Conservative Government Part II*, 246-248, 250-251. On the problem of neo-colonialism see also: 'The theory of "neo-colonialism" as developed in the Soviet Union and in Africa': FO Research Dept Paper, 28 November 1961, in Hyam, *The Conservative Government Part II*, 251-256.
- ⁸⁵ Chadwick (CRO) to Gough (MoD), 11 September 1961, TNA, AIR/1023.
- ⁸⁶ Hunt (Lagos) to Chadwick (CRO), 12 September 1961, TNA, AIR 2/15525.
- ⁸⁷ Kent to Roberts (both AM), 12 September 1961; Roberts to Kent (both AM), 12 September 1961, TNA, AIR 19/1023; Hudleston to Kent (both AM), TNA, AIR 2/15525.
- ⁸⁸ Kent to Roberts (both AM), 19 September 1961, TNA, AIR 19/1023.
- ⁸⁹ Clutterbuck to Sandys (both CRO), 9 November 1961; Chadwick (CRO) to Head (Lagos), 30 November 1961, TNA, AIR 2/15525.

⁹⁰ On Britain's role and withdrawal from East of Suez, see: Darby, *British Defence Policy*; Dockrill, *Britain's Retreat*.

⁹¹ French, "Duncan Sandys," *passim*.

⁹² Head (Lagos) to Sandys (CRO), 5 December 1961, TNA, AIR 2/15525.

⁹³ Chadwick (CRO) to Kent (AM), 19 December 1961; Head (Lagos) to Sandys (CRO), 18 December 1961, TNA, AIR 2/15525.

⁹⁴ Kent (AM) to Martin (CRO), 11 December 1961, TNA, AIR 2/15525; Kent to Roberts (both AM), 11 December 1961; Hudleston to Kent (both AM), 12 December 1961; Kent to Hudleston (both AM), 13 December 1961; Hudleston to Kent (both AM), 15 December 1961; Roberts to Kent (both AM), 18 December 1961; Kent to Hudleston (both AM), 21 December 1961, TNA, AIR 19/1023.

⁹⁵ Boothby (FO) to Martin (CRO), 13 December 1961, TNA, AIR 2/15525.

⁹⁶ Chadwick (CRO) to Wright (MoD), 22 December 1961; Nigerian Defence Agreement (Cmd 1212), Draft, CRO, December 1961, TNA, AIR 2/15525.

⁹⁷ CRO to Kuala Lumpur, 18 December 1961; Kuala Lumpur to CRO, 21 December 1961, TNA, AIR 2/15525.

⁹⁸ C.O.S. (62) 1st Meeting, Chiefs of Staff Committee, Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday, 2nd January, 1962 at 2.45 p.m., TNA, DEFE 4/142.

⁹⁹ Sandys (CRO) to Head (Nigeria), 11 January 1962, TNA, AIR 19/1023.

¹⁰⁰ Head (Lagos) to Sandys (CRO), 13 January 1962, TNA, AIR 19/1023.

¹⁰¹ Sandys (CRO) to Head (Nigeria), 15 January 1962; Head (Lagos) to Sandys (CRO), 16 January 1962; CRO to Lagos, 17 January 1962; Sandys (CRO) to Head (Lagos), 17 January 1962; Sandys (CRO) to Head (Lagos), 19 January 1962, TNA, AIR 19/1023.

¹⁰² Head (Lagos) to Abubakar, 20 January 1962; Abubakar to Head (Lagos), 20 January 1962, TNA, AIR 19/1023.

¹⁰³ Press Notice, Abrogation of U.K. Nigerian Defence Agreement, CRO, 22 January 1962, TNA, AIR 19/1023.

¹⁰⁴ Dean (AM) to Scott (MoD), 26 January 1962; Scott (MoD) to Dean (AM), 8 February 1962, Robert to Dean (AM), 13 February 1962, TNA, AIR 19/1023.

¹⁰⁵ Idang, "The Politics," 230.

¹⁰⁶ See Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*, 261.

¹⁰⁷ Tijani, *Britain, Leftist Nationalists*, 94; Idang, "The Politics," 230; Clayton, "The Military Relations," 202.

¹⁰⁸ Ojedokun, "The Anglo-Nigerian Entente," *passim*.

¹⁰⁹ Walton, *Empire of Secrets*, 210-286.

¹¹⁰ On the transfer of power and France's role in Francophone Africa see, for instance, Chafer, *The End of Empire*; Bat, *Le syndrome Foccart*.